UNDERSTANDING

ALCOHOLISM

a health column from the
Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Mental Health Administration
U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare

How To Get Help for Troubled People—Part I

Many people who write to the National Institute of Mental Health ask the same questions. Some of the most common questions, and their answers, go something like this:

Q. If I do seek help, where would I go?

A. You could start by contacting your local Community Mental Health Center. More than 600 of these centers have been funded by the Federal Government in different parts of the country and are being operated by State and local groups and agencies.

Q. I don't have any hospitalization coverage—where would I get the money to pay for help?

A. The cost of any of the services should depend on what you can afford to pay. So—if you have no money, or very little, services are provided free at these centers.

Q. Wouldn't it be better just to tough it out? I don't like to bother other people with my problems—and things could blow over if I just hang on.

A. That's like having a toothache and not going to the dentist. The price you pay is exactly the same—you keep on hurting.

Q. Suppose I decide to go ahead and visit one of these centers . . . what goes on in one of those places? What's their treatment all about?

A. A specially trained staff member will talk with you about the things that are worrying you.

Q. Talk? I can talk to anyone for free—why pay a doctor?

A. You're quite right—if you have a wise and understanding friend who is willing to listen to your problems, you may not need professional help at all. But often that's not enough. You may need a professionally trained person to help you dig out what's really bothering you—and you may need some medication.

Q. How can just talking make problems disappear?

A. Well, when you're talking to someone who has helped many others with problems similar to yours, that person is able to see the patterns in your life that have led to your unhappiness. In therapy, the job is to help you recognize those patterns—and you may try to change them.

A. Are psychiatrists the only ones who can help?

A. No, a therapist does not have to be a psychiatrist. A number of social workers, psychologists, group workers, and others have been specially trained to work effectively with people's mental and emotional difficulties.

Q. Since I work all day, it would be hard to come during regular working hours. Is the center open at nights or on weekends?

A. This can be arranged, too. Just contact the center for an appointment which will be set up for a time that is convenient.

Q. I am also asking for others in my family. But I know that the idea of coming in to a "Mental Health Center" would seem threatening to my wife. Could I just pretend to her that it's something else?

A. No, indeed. It's better to talk her into it than to lie to her. Don't destroy her trust in you by being deceptive.

Q. Actually, I think my wife could be helped if I could talk her into coming in.

A. This is something you can discuss with someone at the center. Marital or family therapy is available when a problem exists that involves more than one family member.

POINTS FOR HOMEOWNERS
Fix It Yourself For Safety & Economy

HOME ON THE RANGE

You can solve problems at home with your gas range and prevent accidents by knowing a few simple adjustments.

● To adjust pilot, turn adjustment screw on the pilot supply line so that the tip of the flame is 1/8 inch above the pilot shield.

● To remove a surface burner, take out the burner retaining screw and lift the burner from its support.

YOU ARE THE KEEPER of your pilot flame and knowing how to adjust it will solve many oven problems.

● To clean the ignition hole in the side of the burner head use a toothpick or straightened-out paper clip.

● To adjust simmer, remove the control knob and use a small screwdriver to turn screw inside the shaft of burner control.

Further information on range and oven repair can be found in a new book compiled by the editors of Reader's Digest with the help of experts in every field. The "Fix-It-Yourself Manual" uses explicit diagrams to show you how to fix 1,001 things that can go wrong around the house.

Being at home with gas range repair will not only give you the personal satisfaction of doing it yourself, it will help you save the cost of a repairman who might charge $12 to $20 for just stopping by.

DIAL GOOD NEWS
352-7900

CANCER Answer line
American Cancer Society

A regular feature, prepared by the American Cancer Society, to help save your life from cancer.

A cigarette smoker asks: "What are the anti-cigarette programs in other countries?"

ANSWERline: The health dangers of cigarette smoking are a global problem and many nations today are allied in research and anti-smoking activities. To gain insight into this worldwide effort ask your local American Cancer Society Unit for a free copy of a new ACS journal, "World Smoking & Health." One of the most interesting items in a recent issue described trends in Great Britain which has one of the world's highest lung cancer death rate among both men and women. British health educators are becoming more optimistic because the number of quitters continues to rise; cigarette sales are dropping; tar yield of the majority of brands smoked there is dropping, and smokers are switching to low tar cigarettes.

A factory supervisor writes: "There is a blood drive in my community for cancer patients. Why do they need blood?"

ANSWERline: Cancer patients have very special requirements for different components of whole blood. These components can help fight infection which is crucial when you consider that 35% of leukemia patients die of infection not of leukemia. Also, the proper use of blood components can save a great number of cancer patients from dying of hemorrhage. Many forms of cancer therapy suppress the normal function of bone marrow which produces blood cells that are required for active immunity to infection. By giving patients blood components, physicians prolong the time that helpful cancer therapy can be given without making the patient susceptible to infection. Blood from healthy donors is needed because it is the safest to use. If you would like to know more about the cancer patient's blood needs and want to help, please contact your local ACS Unit.

A high school student asks: "When did cancer research begin?"

ANSWERline: The search for answers to questions about cause and treatment of cancer has been going on since ancient times. What we consider modern scientific cancer research began after the Second World War when volunteers of the American Cancer Society raised the largest sum ever available until then for cancer control and research. In the following years, the amount that both ACS and the Federal Government spend to support cancer research has grown to $900 million a year.

The Australian lungfish, discovered alive in 1869, was on earth as early as 200 million years ago.

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